

CITY OF ROCKVILLE PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

July 17, 2003

SUBJECT

Use Permit application USE2003-00659
Chevy Chase Bank

Applicant: Chevy Chase Bank
7501 Wisconsin Avenue,
9th floor
Bethesda, MD 20814

Owner: Same

Date Filed: May 25, 2003

Location: 387 Hungerford Drive



REQUEST

The applicant seeks Use Permit approval for a 3,100 square-foot, freestanding Chevy Chase Bank at this location. The application will also include two drive-through windows.

PREVIOUS RELATED ACTIONS

- Use Permit U-347-85 for 69,035 square-foot, 142 room Imperial Hotel and associated parking. Approved, but expired without action.
- Use Permit U-380-87 for a revised Imperial Hotel. Approved 4/29/87, but expired without action.

RELEVANT ISSUES

In reviewing the application, the following issues emerged and have been addressed:

- The site is a heavily wooded site, and the City Forester has determined that there are few high-quality trees on the site. The Applicant has provided as much reforestation requirements on the site as possible. The Applicant will be allowed to pay a fee in lieu of for the balance of the requirements because of the poor quality of existing forest.

- As part of the review, the State Highway Administration (SHA) has been evaluating the ingress egress from the site (an entrance onto Hungerford will be closed), as well as queuing of automobiles along Beall Avenue. The City has analyzed the traffic statement, with mitigation measures outlined further in this report.

ANALYSIS

Background

This 0.83-acre site went through a Use Permit approval process in 1985 and again in 1987 for a hotel on the site. Both of the Use Permits expired, and the site has remained vacant.

Property Description

The subject of this application is an 0.83-acre tract of land along Hungerford Drive (Md. 355), just north of Beall Avenue. The project is bordered on the north by two office buildings, with the new Archstone residential development just north of that. To the south, the site is adjacent to the existing Merchants Tire store. At the rear of the site, the property is bordered by tracks of the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA/Metro) and CSX/MARC rail.

The site is relatively flat and is heavily wooded with scrub growth, and a nominal number of significant tree species.

Proposal

The applicant is proposing a 3,100 square foot bank facility at this location. As part of the application, the applicant will be constructing a portion of a service drive along Hungerford as required by the Ordinance. The service drive will be 30 feet wide, with a 24-foot travel way, a five-foot sidewalk and a one-foot wide curb. The applicant will also be planting within a seven-foot wide landscape strip adjacent to Hungerford Drive within the State Highway Administration (SHA) right-of-way.

The building will have its main façade facing Hungerford Drive, with a side entrance elevation facing the parking field. Access to the site will be provided from Hungerford Drive via the service drive, through the existing signalized intersection of Beall Avenue and Hungerford Drive in front of Merchants Tire. From the service drive there will be a point of ingress to the drive-throughs via a 14-foot wide, one-way driveway. There will also be a point of ingress and egress to the parking lot from the service drive. An existing entrance onto Hungerford Drive on the north side of the site will be closed as part of this application, per City and SHA requirements.

There are 19 parking spaces within the parking field adjacent to the building, with an additional five provided adjacent to the front façade. A total of 16 are required for this use.

A separate delineated driveway is provided on the site to get from the front service drive to the drive-through lanes. There will be a bioretention area and plantings located between the driveway and the parking field. Another bioretention area is provided to the extreme northern edge of the site, adjacent to the exit for the drive-through lane.

As stated before, there will be two drive-through windows associated with this project that will be covered with an architecturally compatible cover. There will also be a walk-up Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) attached to the front façade of the building the faces Hungerford Drive.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approval is recommended, subject to the following conditions:

1. Submission, for approval by the Chief of Planning, of eleven (11) copies of the site plan, revised according to Planning Commission Exhibit A.
2. Submit detailed engineering drawings with supporting computations to DPW for review and approval for:
 - a. stormwater management.
 - b. sediment control.
 - c. public improvements including water, sanitary sewer, storm drain and paving, sidewalk, street tree and lighting, and signing/marketing (per latest edition of MUTCD).
3. Post bonds and obtain permits from DPW.
4. Submission for the approval of the Chief of Planning, of 11 copies of a Landscape Plan that is revised according to Planning Commission Exhibit B.
5. The south driveway entrance access to MD 355 shall be closed, with site access occurring from the service road constructed as part of this plan, per Exhibit A
6. Post bonds and obtain necessary permits from MSHA for utility connections (water/storm drain), driveway closure and street trees.
7. On-site signing and marking condition are to be included on the Signature Drawings as per Exhibit A.
8. Provide easements to the City for all public utilities not located in the City right-of-way.
9. Add fire hydrants as shown on Exhibit A.
10. Applicant must provide existing water and sewer easement information for connections to adjacent building.
11. Applicant will create public sewer easement as shown on plans.

12. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the Applicant shall contribute \$70,650 to the City's Transportation Improvement CIP fund to mitigate traffic impact generated by the project on the adjacent roadway network. This contribution shall be in the form of cash or the value of physical improvements/public services proposed by the applicant and approved at the sole discretion of the Director of Public Works. These funds will be directed toward pedestrian or roadway improvements through a CIP project within the immediate area or the Town Center Planning Area.
13. No loading or unloading will be permitted along the MD 355 service drive.
14. Applicant shall contribute, prior to issuance of building permits, a monetary contribution of \$6,500.00 for the implementation of a bus shelter to be located adjacent to the subject site. This contribution will be incorporated into the Bus Stop Beautification CIP.
15. The Applicant shall contribute \$3,100 to the City's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) CIP fund before the issuance of an Occupancy permit. The contribution is equal to \$0.10 cents a square foot per year, for ten years, of gross floor area of the retail component for a total of \$3,100 (3,100 square feet x \$0.10 = \$310/year x 10 years). These funds will be used for various programs designed to reduce the number and impact of vehicle trips within the planning area. This sum will be incorporated to the TDM program funds of the City.
16. Submission of an applicant-signed copy of the Use Permit approval letter.

TRANSPORTATION

Traffic

The primary means of ingress and egress to this site is via a proposed 25-foot service drive adjacent to Hungerford Drive as per the requirements of the Ordinance. Vehicles can access the site from the signalized intersection of MD 355/Beall Avenue along the service drive. All vehicles exiting the site will have to exit via the service drive and travel north on MD 355. An existing opening to the service drive from Hungerford Drive farther to the north of the Beall Avenue intersection will be closed as part of this application.

This site, while having a traffic impact on Hungerford Drive its intersections with Beall Avenue and North Washington Street, provides little opportunity to mitigate their traffic impact through physical road improvements. Therefore, the applicant will be required to make a one-time contribution of \$70,650 to the City for road improvements elsewhere in the general vicinity that are earmarked for future CIP projects. Additional mitigation measures are outlined within the conditions above.

Parking

There are 16 spaces required for this application. There are 24 proposed.

Architecture

The architecture for this building will be similar to that of other Chevy Chase bank facilities in the area, with some minor differences. The Design Guidelines of the 2001 Town Center Master Plan state that buildings along Hungerford Drive should not be one-story in height. This site, given its small size, presents a design challenge to accommodate this provision while still allowing required parking for the FAR attained and open space required.

In this case, the applicant has created a “clear story,” which gives the outward appearance of the building having a one and a half to two-story appearance, while practically functioning on the interior as a one-story operation. This provides an acceptable method of addressing the Design Guidelines. In addition, required parking for banks is less than retail, allowing more open space and area for on-site reforestation requirements.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

A stormwater management concept plan has been approved for this project. Water quality for the majority of the site will be provided by an on-site bioretention facility in a median within the parking area. These facilities will be landscaped as per the approved landscape plan. Water quality for the periphery of the site and all of the water quantity will be handled through monetary participation in Rockville’s regional SWM participation fund.

LANDSCAPING

A landscape plan for the site has been provided as Planning Commission Exhibit “B.” The landscape plan includes areas that are to be reforested as part of the application and City requirements.

Forest/Tree Preservation

There is an approved Forest Conservation Plan that addresses the significant trees on this site that are to be replaced as part of this application. See condition 4 above.

Equipment Screening

All transformers or telecommunications equipment are required by the City of Rockville to be placed underground. Any equipment that the applicant proposes to place above ground must be approved in accordance with the submission and approval of a waiver of the city’s underground utility requirements. This waiver must be approved by the City of Rockville Planning Commission.

The Applicant has indicated that all equipment locations are shown on the plans and will be underground. Also, there will be no overhead utility line connections.

PUBLIC ART IN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENTS

Chevy Chase Bank has stated that they will donate 0.5% of construction costs in excess of \$500,000 to the City of Rockville's "Friends of the Arts" fund to support arts-related activities, as per the established guidelines for Public Art in Private Development.

STAFF COMMENTS

Staff endorses this application with the accompanying conditions of approval, and recommends approval of USE2003-00659.

NOTIFICATION

Notices were sent to approximately 720 residences, businesses and association presidents, including Lincoln Park, East Rockville, West End and College Square.

APPROVAL LIMITATIONS

Section 25-193(d) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that **construction or operation must commence within two (2) years of the date of this decision or application approval shall expire.** If the applicant can show just cause, a maximum of two (2) time extensions may be granted by the Planning Commission, each not to exceed one year. However, time extensions are not automatically approved, and sufficient detail and justification will be required in order for the Planning Commission to consider granting an extension.

CONCLUSION

Staff believes that this application will create an acceptable addition to the Hungerford Drive area, as well as provide a service for the residents of the area as well as the new downtown development.

Attachments